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STATEMENT ON GOVERNOR BAKER'S APPOINTMENT OF THE MBTA SPECIAL PANEL

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Transportation for Massachusetts, a statewide coalition supporting affordable and reliable transportation for a more prosperous Commonwealth, welcomes the Governor's creation of the MBTA Special Panel as a positive step towards improving public transportation service provided by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

We expect the panel's collective experience and expertise will provide the Governor and legislature with an important base of knowledge for the critical decisions still to come. We applaud the 30-day time period for conducting the review. It demonstrates the Governor's commitment to diagnosing the problem quickly so that he and his team can swiftly turn to the important work of implementing solutions.

The Governor has indicated he supports a world-class, 21st century public transportation system. By comprehensively assessing the MBTA's operations, governance and finances, the Governor will be in a better position to make considered recommendations for the long term, even as the MBTA works on the short term service recovery that is critical to the region and to public confidence.

The panel will be aided by past studies and reports, by access to MBTA staff and by public input and suggestions. Many experts and bi-partisan studies have highlighted chronic underfunding of our transportation as the most critical impediment to improving transit service. We look forward to working with the Baker-Polito administration and the State Legislature to develop both the reforms and revenues needed for a transportation network that is worthy of the Commonwealth.

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